

## 1330.0 - Education News, Jul 2008

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## Education News - July 2008

This newsletter highlights the latest curriculum related teaching resources, student activities and statistical tools that have been developed by ABS Education Services as well as other ABS resources that are useful for schools.

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### 1. CensusAtSchool 2008 Data Now Available



**"Many thanks for the CensusAtSchool program. We are having tremendous success"** - Victor Davidson, Teacher Librarian, Birrong Girls High School.

The CensusAtSchool 2008 database is now open. Over 44,000 student responses are included in the database, making it a valuable resource for the classroom once again. Students can use the 2008 Random Sampler to extract relevant, up to date information on student lifestyles, attitudes to environmental and social issues, technology, time spent on

various activities, reaction times, sleeping and eating habits and much, much more. This time students will have the choice of generating samples from either the 2006 or 2008 database. Students can even filter the data they want to analyse, whether it be the international questions, common questions or all questions from the questionnaire.

The data can also be accessed through Prepared Samples and Information Tables, via the CensusAtSchool Data page of the CensusAtSchool website. Alternatively if you're seeking some inspiration for activities, please visit the CensusAtSchool Classroom Activities and Case Studies area to see how other schools are using the data in the classroom. Finally, don't miss the new Variable Sheets and Common Questions cheat sheet recently added to the Project Reference Documents page. These Excel downloads offer helpful information/explanations for analysing common questions between the 2006 and 2008 questionnaires, and provide descriptions of each variable in your random sample.

Thank you to all the schools that have participated in 2008 and the encouraging feedback received. The database would not exist without you!

**How to get involved:** Generate a Random Sample from the Student Area of the website. Please contact the **CensusAtSchool Team** if you have a query or if you would like to provide some feedback. We'd love to hear from you.

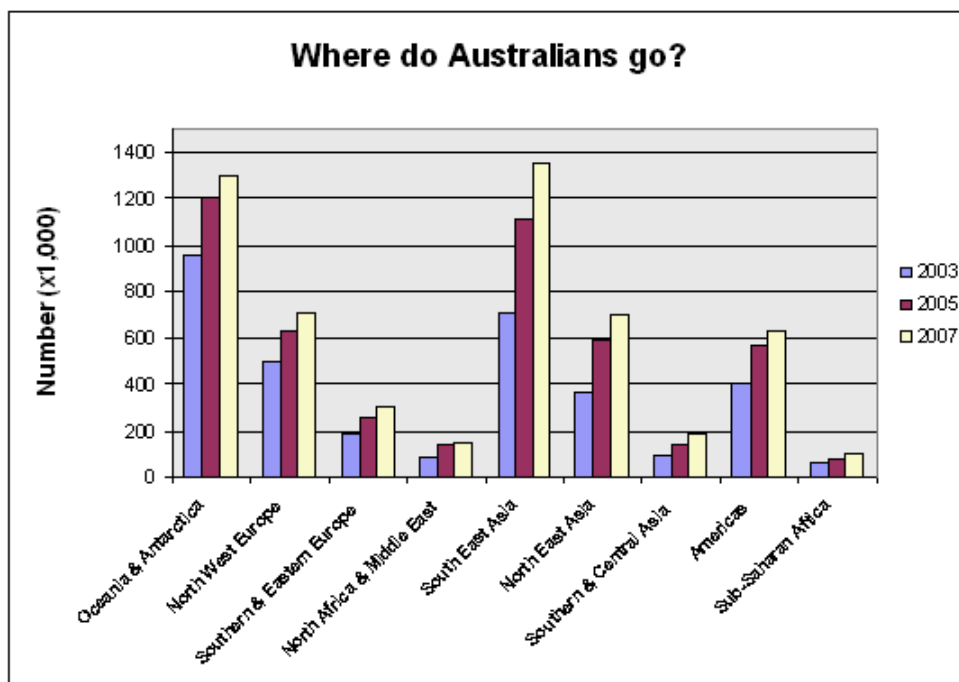
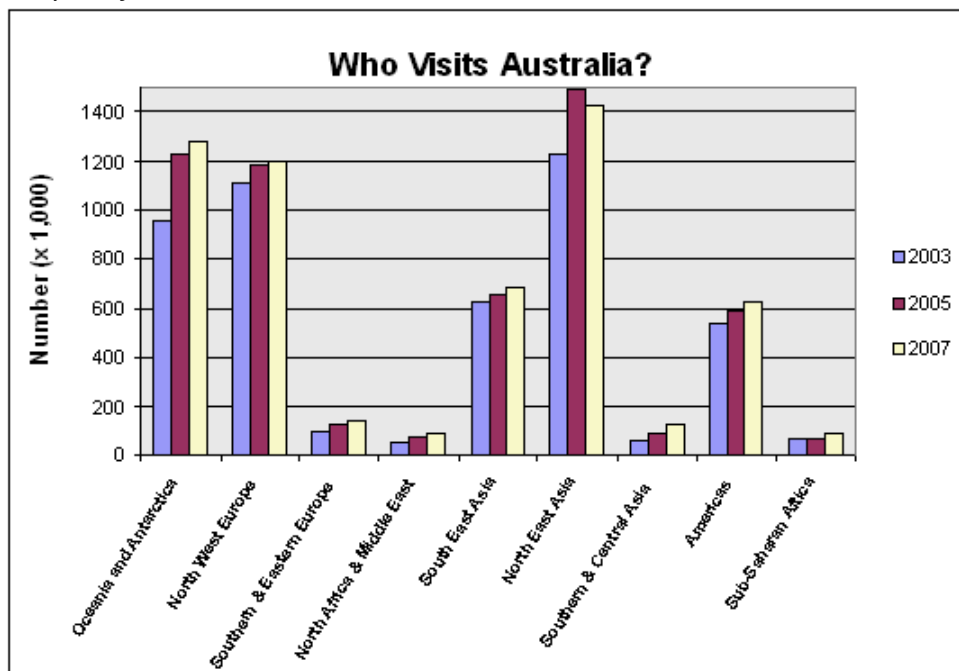
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### 2. An Idea for the Classroom

New **Datasets** were added to the ABS Education pages in June. Two of those detail where short term

visitors to Australia are from, and where Australian's go for short term visits. The datasets contain information for 2004 and 2006 as well as the three years (2003, 2005 and 2007) graphed below.

This information could be useful in many humanities classrooms, as well as in Business, Recreation, Hospitality and Tourism classes.



Some questions that you could ask your students:

Which countries are included in each classification? You can find the full list of country classifications in **Standard Australian Classification of Countries** (cat. no. 1269.0).

What are the changes over time for visitors to Australia and for holidays out of Australia?

Are these changes the same for both? What might explain these changes?

**Do you have a classroom idea that uses ABS data or ABS Education products? Let us know at [education@abs.gov.au](mailto:education@abs.gov.au) and we can share it with schools around Australia.**

### 3. Economic DataSets Now Available

As well as new social datasets, there are now **Economic Datasets** available to help your students examine economic indicators. The datasets include useful links to associated glossaries and information about the data is gathered and compiled. There are twelve datasets to choose from including commonly used economic indicators such as the Consumer Price Index (CPI), the Balance of Payments (BOP) and unemployment. The datasets have been specifically designed to assist students to use and understand ABS economic data.

The **Economic Datasets** are user-friendly and an ideal resource for SOSE, HSIE or Economics/Commerce classes.

### 4. Free Teacher Librarian Information Sessions

Extremely successful Teacher Librarian information sessions were run in Melbourne earlier this year and now we're expanding them across the country. These free, hands-on internet workshops will show you how to quickly access up-to-date information from the ABS website, for many subject areas and year levels. As well you'll discover the many on-line products and resources developed especially for teachers.



Where	When	Contact name and email	Number
Brisbane, Cyberschool, University of Qld	22 August	Judy Tayt judy.tayt@abs.gov.au	07 3222 6181
Canberra ABS House, Belconnen	23 September	Nicola Cross nicola.cross@abs.gov.au	02 6252 6606
Sydney ABS Offices, Sydney Square	23 September	Anne Freer anne.freer@abs.gov.au	02 9268 4569
Melbourne, ABS Offices, 485 La Trobe St	28 October	Gai Mooney gai.mooney@abs.gov.au	03 9615 7530
Darwin / Palmerston Palmerston Public Library	30 October	Pia Loffley pia.loffley@abs.gov.au	08 8943 2110
Adelaide, ABS Offices, 11 Waymouth St	5 November	Pam Balfour pam.balfour@abs.gov.au	08 8237 7588
Hobart/ Launceston	TBA	Terri Fox therese.fox@abs.gov.au	03 6222 5835
Perth	TBA	Margaret Garner margaret.garner@abs.gov.au	08 9360 5127

#### Places are limited

These workshops are free and have limited numbers, so they will fill quickly. To secure your place, RSVP to the relevant contact above, with your name, contact details and school.

If you would like further information contact the relevant person in your state/territory or call Education Services on Freecall 1800 623 273.

### 5. VITTA, the ABS and Financial Literacy

The Victorian Information Technology Teachers Association (VITTA) is collaborating with ABS Education Services by utilising teacher materials for Commerce and Economics to help promote financial literacy. The Commerce and Economic classroom activities are a FREE resource for teachers. The activities integrate Information Communication Technology (ICT) for visualising thinking, creating and communicating, while developing economic knowledge and understanding. They cover years 8-10 and are tailored to suit each state and territory curriculum.

The activities include:

- Growth in Microcredit
- Microcredit, Regional Comparisons
- Human Capital, Education and Training and the Labour Market
- Male/Female Differences in Education and the Labour Market
- Using Exchange Rates
- Markets

The program involves ICT for visualising thinking, ICT for creating and ICT for communicating. The activities will be available freely from VITTA Resource Portal and ABS Education Services web pages.

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## 6. Second Successful StatSmart conference



StatSmart is a three year professional learning research project aimed at both investigating and improving teaching practice and student outcomes in statistics for middle year students. It is funded by an Australian Research Council Linkage grant and is supported by the University of Tasmania, University of New England, Noel Baker Centre for School Mathematics, Key Curriculum Press and the Australian Bureau of Statistics. On May 1 and 2, 44 teachers from Victoria, South Australia and

Tasmania who are involved in the study met again at the ABS offices in Melbourne. They shared the work that they have developed for their classes as well as participated in hands on activities aimed at improving both statistical understanding and teaching methods.

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## 7. Australian Statistics Poster Competition



The ABS is again a sponsor of the **Australian Statistics Poster Competition** being run by the University of Southern Queensland. This competition fits well into chance and data streams of school mathematics courses and allows the content to be covered using a project based approach.

Participants choose their own investigation questions and the competition develops skills in team work, problem solving, creativity, design, management, analysis and logic, as well as statistics. Ideas for projects are included on the website including some ways you could use CensusAtSchool data. Students also learn the importance of mathematics for identifying patterns and associations which form the basis for real-world learning and decision making.

There are National and State prizes for both lower Secondary and upper Secondary. Highly Commended Certificates will be awarded to entries that the judges consider of a high order and all participants will receive a Participation Certificate. Judging will be based on both the planning and data collection and the analysis and presentation.

There is a fee of \$19.80 per team to cover the administrative costs of running the competition. Registration is required, posters are due by **12 September, 2008**.

### Some useful resources

As well as information about the competition, the web site includes '**Notes on Statistical Analysis**' (pdf 148 kB) which includes a very useful summary for data analysis as well as information to help students use the correct graphs, tables and analyses for their investigation. Another paper that discusses the use of statistics in scientific investigations, '**Statistical Literacy and Scientific Investigation**' (pdf 112 kB) is available from

the ABS website.

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## 8. Conference Participation

In the past few months ABS Education Services has attended conferences in Tasmania (Maths Teachers Association of Tasmania), South Australia (Geography Teachers Association of South Australia), Queensland (Queensland Maths Teachers Association) and Victoria (Business Educators Australia). As well we have liaised with and provided resources to, teacher organisations in Western Australia and New South Wales.

Over the next few months you can find us at ACEC 2008 (Canberra), International Middle Years Conference (Adelaide), Geography Teachers Association Victoria conference (Melbourne) and Maths Association of NSW conference (Wollongong).

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## 9. Recently Released Publications

The inaugural '**Statistical Language!**' publication has recently been released and is an ideal educational resource for both students and teachers. The glossary of basic statistical terms provides definitions and examples of statistical concepts such as mode, mean, median, percentage and probability. It is easy to use and is designed as an introductory resource to help improve understanding of fundamental statistical concepts.

State and territory based publications are a great way to engage students with relevant and up-to-date ABS data and improve statistical literacy. **NSW in Focus 2008** has recently been released and provides a snapshot of activity within the state. Drawing on both ABS and non-ABS sources, *NSW in Focus* has twelve chapters presenting a rich range of social, economic and environmental data. New in this year's publication is the inclusion of "Statistical Highlights" which provides some analysis and graphs on selected indicators. Each chapter also features a summary table of selected indicators allowing users to track changes over time, and a list of data sources which are a helpful reference for further research.

Remember, **all** ABS publications are **free** to download from the ABS website.

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## 10. Contact details

How to contact **ABS Education Services**

**Free Call:** 1800 623 273

**email:** [education@abs.gov.au](mailto:education@abs.gov.au)

**Mail:** GPO Box 2796

Melbourne, 3001

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